

ABSTRACT

Thesis Title: The Effect of Pre-Shot Routine on Performance of a Drive in Golf

Student: Dongbin Lee

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The purpose of this study was to establish the pre-shot routine usage pattern of amateur golfers using the driver and to correlate that pattern to their effectiveness off the tee. Forty eight participants including 42 males and 6 females participated in this study. The mean age of the total population was 34.6 ± 12.4 and ranged from 20 to 60 years of age. The participants were asked to answer the pre-shot routine questionnaire. The participants completed the 5 section questionnaire consisting of subject demographics, playing experience, playing ability, driving ability from the tee box, and pre-shot routine on the tee.

The participants indicated that slicing was the biggest problem. The results show that 37.4% of the participants sliced the ball 50% of the time or more. Of those individuals 4.2% sliced the ball 100% of the time. Hooking the ball was less of a problem with only 18.8% hooking 50% or more of the time. Hitting the ball fat (taking too much turf) and hitting the ball too thin (no turf taken) gave similar results, with 16.7% of the subjects hitting fat shots 50% of the time or more, and 12.5% of them hitting thin shots 50% of the time or more. The biggest difference being that none of the respondents hit fat or thin shot 100% of the time.

A majority of the participants (66.6%) have a great deal of confidence that they would hit a good tee shot from an open fairway. However, that confidence level drops to only 27.1% when the fairway is tree lined and only 4.2% of our participants feel confidence 100% of the time. If the tee shot has to be made over water only 35.5% of the respondents feel confidence

off the tee with 18.8% in the 100% category. The last factor we asked them to rate was whether or not they had confidence if someone was playing with them. Only 35.4% of the respondents felt confident 80% of the time or more, with only 12.5% being confident all of the time.

Participants using the white, blue and gold tee box stand behind the ball and pick a target but the participants using the red tee box did not at all. It is interesting to note that the players with the best handicap and lowest average score use this technique 100% of the time, whereas less than half of the white and blue tee box players use it. It shows that standing behind the ball and picking a target may be more useful for the golfers than just lining up as they address the ball.

Other elements like practice swing, mental rehearsal, and movement do not seem to have much correlation to the players ability in that they showed a great deal of variation. We can say that these elements are affected by personal habit or routine more than their playing ability. Although the forward push is highly recommended by professional players and instructors very few participants in this study used this technique.

The results of this study show that a consistent pre-shot routine does not help amateur golfers. The inconsistency of the pre-shot routine these subjects used makes it impossible to make recommendations concerning the effectiveness of a pre-shot routine. What the data does do is provide the framework for additional research in which subjects are required to use the same pre-shot routine that is designed by professionals.